

# MARKET GUIDE FOR B.C. AGRIFOOD AND SEAFOOD EXPORTERS

## GERMANY



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# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to assist B.C. agrifood and seafood exporters targeting the German market by informing them about key topics such as: the German business environment; key regulatory agencies; finding and assessing buyers; distribution channel options; social and business customs; and the development and maintenance of relationships in Germany. The following table summarizes the key information in this guide:

<b>Introduction to the German market</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Germany is the largest economy in Europe and the fourth largest national economy in the world. As a member of the European Union (EU), Germany shares a common customs union and a single open market with other EU Member States.</li> <li>The <a href="#">Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)</a> came into force in September 2017; tariffs on most agrifood and seafood products entering the EU from Canada have been removed.</li> <li>German consumers spend considerably on food and beverages, but are price sensitive, risk-averse and suspicious of unsubstantiated claims made about food products.</li> </ul>
<b>Market Readiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market readiness means you have taken the steps to ensure that the product(s) you want to export to Germany are fully compliant with German and European laws and import/export regulations.</li> <li>In general, certification requirements and other standards are developed at the EU level and enforced by Member State customs officials.</li> <li>German and European agencies participate in regulating imports of agrifood and seafood, including the <a href="#">EU DG Health and Food Safety (DG SANTO)</a>, the <a href="#">Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (BLE)</a>, the <a href="#">Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMELV)</a>, and the <a href="#">German Customs Authority (ZOLL)</a>.</li> <li>Documentation for exporting agrifood or seafood to the EU is extensive. Rely on your German customer(s), the <a href="#">EU Trade Helpdesk</a>, the <a href="#">Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)</a> and <a href="#">Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)</a> before shipping any goods.</li> </ul>
<b>Selling to Germany</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct sales into the German market are not common as retailers prefer to deal with local importers/distributors. Therefore, it is more effective to approach the market through local business partners who have established distribution channels and can provide locally based technical support.</li> <li>Attending food exhibition shows, developing online content, visiting the country and utilizing in-market resources can assist companies to generate consumer and importer demand.</li> <li>Corruption is uncommon but standard due diligence should be executed prior to signing contracts and establishing formal relationships.</li> <li>The English-language version of Germany's <a href="#">National Association of German Commercial Agencies and Distribution</a> as well as the <a href="#">German Wholesale and Foreign Trade Federation</a>, can help you identify importers. Databases of importers by product class are available for purchase through companies such as <a href="#">Best Food Importers</a>.</li> <li>Germany is among the leading jurisdictions globally for agrifood or seafood focused trade shows.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Relationships in Germany</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business relationships in Germany are relatively formal and a strict separation between private and work life is maintained.</li> <li>Punctuality, formal/conservative dress and organized presentations are valued in business meetings.</li> <li>German is the official language and while many business people speak English you will likely require a translator to assist you in meetings and negotiations if you do not speak German.</li> <li>Decisions are often made by consensus among a group of senior managers. Contracts are detailed and binding.</li> <li>Table etiquette and manners are important in Germany.</li> </ul>
<b>Export Support and Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Canadian Trade Commissioners</a> and <a href="#">BC Trade and Investment Representatives</a> have representatives based in Europe to assist B.C. exporters.</li> <li>Exporters should make themselves aware of cost-sharing programs and promotional support provided by provincial and federal agencies and organizations.</li> </ul>

## SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION TO THE GERMAN MARKET

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### 2.1 – GERMANY’S ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Germany has long been one of the economic engines of Europe. With approximately one-third the land base of British Columbia, the country of 81 million people has the fourth largest national economy in the world and represents the largest single market in the European Union (EU). The vast market presents opportunities for new exporters, but it is complex and must be approached strategically. Germany was ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in the latest World Bank [Ease of Doing Business Index](#).

The EU, of which Germany is a member, represents a customs union and a single open market. Most Member States, including Germany, use the same currency (the Euro) and regardless of where in the EU imported goods are declared and clear customs, they can circulate freely and be sold anywhere within the European Union.

By population, the cities of Berlin, Hamburg, Munich and Cologne are Germany’s largest, while Hamburg, Bremerhaven and Wilhelmshaven are the biggest commercial ports. Germany has excellent transportation infrastructure and cold-chain storage, so no area of the country is beyond the reach of a potential agrifood and seafood exporter.

The [Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement \(CETA\)](#) came into force in September 2017 and has made the European Union, including Germany, a more favourable jurisdiction for British Columbian exporters by providing preferential access and removal of tariffs on virtually all sectors of the economy, including for agrifood and seafood products.

### 2.2 – GERMANY’S AGRIFOOD AND SEAFOOD SECTOR

Germany has large areas of arable land and the agricultural sector is technologically advanced. They lead the EU in production of pork and dairy, and are second in production of beef and veal. Approximately 1.6% of the German work force is employed directly in the agriculture sector, generating about 2% of GDP annually. Germany has a relatively small but efficient ocean fishery sector, based primarily in the North and Baltic seas.

### 2.3 – GERMANY’S AGRIFOOD AND SEAFOOD IMPORTS

Germany imports vast amounts of agrifood and seafood annually. In 2017, Canada was the 42<sup>nd</sup> largest supplier of agrifood and seafood to Germany, with exports totalling approximately \$390 million. Canadian exports to Germany in 2017 were 27% lower than the value in 2013, and Canadian market share fell by 42% over the same period owing to increases in German imports from other supplying nations.

Table: Value of Agrifood and Seafood Exports to Germany, Top 10 Supplying Countries 2013-17

Country	Value of Exports (\$ Billions)			Market Share		
	2013	2017	%-Change	2013	2017	%-Change
<b>Netherlands</b>	21.1	26.4	25	19.6	19.7	1
<b>Italy</b>	8.4	10.5	25	7.8	7.8	0
<b>France</b>	9.2	9.9	7	8.6	7.4	-14
<b>Poland</b>	6.2	9.3	50	5.7	6.9	21
<b>Spain</b>	6.4	8.5	32	5.9	6.3	7
<b>Belgium</b>	5.5	6.8	23	5.1	5.0	-1
<b>Denmark</b>	4.7	5.7	21	4.4	4.3	-3
<b>Austria</b>	4.2	5.5	31	3.9	4.1	6
<b>USA</b>	3.6	4.3	20	3.3	3.2	-4
<b>Brazil</b>	3.9	3.7	-5	3.6	2.8	-24
<b>Canada (42<sup>nd</sup>)</b>	0.54	0.39	-27	0.5	0.3	-42

Source: [International Trade Centre Trade Map](#). Accessed June 2018.

The following table describes the class (by 2-digit HS code) of agrifood and seafood products that, for each of the top supplying countries, achieved the highest rate of growth in value of exports to Germany between 2013 and 2017.

Table: Largest Percentage Increases in Exports, by 2-digit HS Code for Top 10 Supplying Countries, 2013-17

Country	Product (by HS Code), Growth Rate in Value of Exports 2013-17
<b>Netherlands</b>	Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruit or melons (79%)
	Cocoa and cocoa preparations (71%)
	Oil seeds and oleaginous fruits; miscellaneous grains, seeds and fruit (64%)
<b>Italy</b>	Lac; gums, resins and other vegetable saps and extracts (173%)
	Cocoa and cocoa preparations (69%)
	Coffee, tea, maté and spices (54%)
<b>France</b>	Live trees and other plants; bulbs, roots and the like; cut flowers and ornamental foliage (181%)
	Coffee, tea, maté and spices (79%)
	Cocoa and cocoa preparations (35%)
<b>Poland</b>	Beverages, spirits and vinegar (216%)
	Residues and waste from the food industries; prepared animal fodder (198%)
	Preparations of cereals, flour, starch or milk; pastrycooks' products
<b>Spain</b>	Live animals (649%)
	Fish and crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates (141%)
	Residues and waste from the food industries; prepared animal fodder (89%)
<b>Belgium</b>	Oil seeds and oleaginous fruits; miscellaneous grains, seeds and fruit (113%)
	Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citrus fruit or melons (68%)
	Cocoa and cocoa preparations (67%)
<b>Denmark</b>	Edible vegetables and certain roots and tubers (133%)
	Fish and crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates (77%)
	Dairy produce; birds' eggs; natural honey; other edible products of animal origin (55%)
<b>Austria</b>	Residues and waste from the food industries; prepared animal fodder (59%)
	Cereals (57%)
	Beverages, spirits and vinegar (53%)
<b>USA</b>	Cocoa and cocoa preparations (323%)
	Live animals (147%)
	Edible vegetables and certain roots and tubers (135%)
<b>Brazil</b>	Preparations of cereals, flour, starch or milk; pastrycooks' products (158%)
	Sugars and sugar confectionery (144%)
	Live animals (130%)

Country	Product (by HS Code), Growth Rate in Value of Exports 2013-17
<b>Canada (42<sup>nd</sup>)</b>	Animal or vegetable fats and oils and their cleavage products; prepared edible fats (1511%) Lac; gums, resins and other vegetable saps and extracts (335%) Cocoa and cocoa preparations (310%)

Source: [International Trade Centre Trade Map](#). Accessed June 2018.

Agrifood and seafood exports from BC to Germany fell by 53% in 2017 compared to 2016, primarily because of a significant decrease in the value of salmon exported. Cherry exports in 2017 were particularly strong.

Table: Top 5 BC Agrifood and Seafood Exports to Germany, 2015-17

Commodity	Value of Exports (\$ Millions)			2016-2017 %-Change
	2015	2016	2017	
Salmon	2.6	4.35	0.65	-85
Cherries	0.13	0.05	0.62	1173
Mushrooms	0.42	0.88	0.45	-49
Sugar Confectionary	-	-	0.38	n/a
Caviar Substitutes	0.51	0.82	0.31	-62
<b>Subtotal Top 5</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>6.09</b>	<b>2.41</b>	<b>-60</b>
Rest of Products	3.50	3.11	1.89	-39
<b>Total BC Agrifood and Seafood Exports to Germany</b>	<b>7.15</b>	<b>9.21</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>-53</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, CATSNET Analytics. March 2018.

## 2.4 – CULINARY CULTURE, CONSUMER LIFESTYLES AND CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

German consumers enjoy strong purchasing power and the national economy has strengthened over the past few years. However, most shoppers are very savvy and price sensitive. The aging population has influenced trends among food consumption but recent waves of immigration have infused the country with younger and more diverse consumers. While it is recommended that you undertake market research specific to your sector and products in order to understand how your market is affected by consumer lifestyles and culture in Germany, the following are general trends and features of German consumer patterns to be aware of:

- **Germany has one of the world’s oldest populations and consumers with an increasing interest in health and wellness products.**
  - By the year 2030, one-in-three citizens are expected to be over 60 years of age. This affects overall consumption patterns and leads to more consumers opting for health and wellness products.
  - German consumers are increasing their consumption of fish as it becomes more available and in response to health perceptions that favour fish over red meat consumption. About half of all fish and seafood consumption is at restaurants, with 30% selling through retail channels.
- **German consumers have high incomes but are price sensitive.**
  - Germans spend more of their disposable income on food and beverages than the average Canadian, but slightly less than other European countries.

- **Germans tend to be savvy and risk-averse consumers.**
  - Suspicious of claims that are “too good to be true”. The German consumer appreciates and expects honest product claims. Trust can be a valuable asset and people will be willing to pay a premium when they can rely on the quality or environmental claims being made.
- **Green economy and preference for sustainability and Organic products.**
  - Certified Organic food has long been popular and commonly available in Germany
  - Sustainable seafood products have been gaining popularity, and animal welfare has long been a prime consideration for German consumers.
  - New products in the agrifood and seafood category have relied on claims that emphasise the environmentally friendly packaging, premium quality, and ease of use.
- **E-commerce is a growing trend, although cash payments are trusted above electronic methods.**
  - 90% of the population is connected to the internet and e-commerce is increasing in popularity. German consumers have a history of purchasing consumer items via catalogue and so are quite receptive to shopping on online platforms.
  - Germans tend to prefer to use cash in part because of privacy concerns with electronic payment methods. E-commerce sellers have made use of services that allow online purchases to be paid for using cash at participating local retailers.

## 2.5 – MARKET INTELLIGENCE

You should undertake as much market research as possible given your budget and timeframe. In addition to answering any specific questions you might have, good market research allows you to:

- Determine if there is a potential market for your product;
- Understand the strategy, strengths and weaknesses of your major competitors;
- Strategize how best to position your product (e.g. price, packaging, value proposition) and leverage the highest potential competitive advantage;
- Minimize the risk of making a poor investment decision.

The following approaches and sources can be used to gather market information:

- **Consult with government agencies and industry and trade associations in your sector.**
  - These could include: [B.C. Trade & Investment Representative](#), [Canadian Trade Commissioners](#), [Agriculture and Agrifood Canada](#), [Small Business B.C.](#), [Global Affairs Canada](#), [The Embassy of Canada to Germany](#), and chambers of commerce including the [Canadian German Chamber of Industry and Commerce](#).
- **Conduct online research for available material.** Many of the following resources provide market-specific information free of charge, but there may be a fee to access larger quantities of intelligence or information that is particularly valuable or hard to come by:
  - [Canada Business Network](#) is a hub for the Canadian export market that includes links to market and sector information, trade statistics and sources of trade leads and potential partners.
  - [CIA World Factbook](#) is a reference resource with almanac-style information about the countries of the world. It provides summaries of the demographics, geography, communications, government, economy, and military of most of the countries of the world.
  - [Economist Intelligence Unit](#) is the research and analysis division of The Economist Group and world leader in global business intelligence.

- [Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations \(Statistics Division\)](#) is a source of knowledge and information related to agriculture, forestry and fishery.
  - [Global Trade Tracker \(GTT\)](#) offers original trade statistics from the world's principal trading countries.
  - The [Federal Statistical Office of Germany](#) produces and makes available German national statistics.
  - [Santander Trade Portal](#) is a resource that provides access to 40+ worldwide databases, 10,000 pages of information on 185 countries, and more than 150,000 suppliers and importers.
  - [United States Department of Agriculture's Global Agriculture Information Network \(GAIN\)](#) provides information and reports about the agricultural economy, products and issues in foreign countries that are likely to have an impact on trade.
- **Access a global research firms that conducts regular market intelligence in Germany.** The following are a sample of intelligence companies which are available to exporters, and it is possible you will find a suitable firm that is not listed below. Information from these sources will generally not be provided free of charge, but may be the only way to obtain certain information.
- [Development Bank Canada](#) provides industry experts to identify the right collection tools and to handle data mining and analysis.
  - [Euromonitor International](#) is a leading provider of global business intelligence and publishes industry, country and global reports.
  - [Global Research & Data Services](#) publishes reports from over 200 industries and 100 countries, providing difficult-to-find market data.
  - [Hoovers Research](#) provides reports across a range of industries including the food & beverage sector. Global reports by Hoovers Research provide regional and country-level market analysis.
  - [Nielsen](#) studies consumer trends and habits in more than 100 countries.
  - [Planet Retail](#) is a leading provider of global retail intelligence.
  - [Statistics Market Research Consulting](#) reports provide strategic recommendations, market forecasts, and competitive landscaping.
  - [VPG Market Research](#) publishes international market research for corporate executives and key decision-makers in the food & beverage industry, among others. VPG has clients in 70 countries and provides market intelligence and strategic insights.
- **Visit the market personally:**
- Do not underestimate the value in simply taking a trip to Germany yourself to gather first-hand insights and intelligence. It can be very powerful not only in terms of talking to potential buyers and distributors but also in terms of identifying competing products. Visiting different supermarkets and retailers can be invaluable as it allows you to get a sense of products and packaging in Germany and allows you to assess the price range and market approach used by potential competitors.

## SECTION 3: MARKET READINESS

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The first step to achieving sales in Germany is ensuring that your business is market ready. This means that your product is eligible for export to Germany/European Union and you are compliant with all necessary requirements, standards and regulations, including exporter registration, labelling, testing, inspection, and customs clearance preparations.

### 3.1 – GERMAN/EUROPEAN AGENCIES INVOLVED IN OVERSEEING IMPORTS

Several German and European Union agencies are involved with regulating aspects of import/export, including:

- [DG SANCO – European Commission’s DG Health and Food Safety](#)
  - Regulates agrifood and seafood imports to the European Union.
  - Responsible for EU policy on food safety and health, and for monitoring the implementation of related laws.
  
- [Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food \(BLE\)](#)
  - German government agency responsible for foreign trade regulations related to agrifood and seafood products.
  - Competent authority for issuing import licences related to agrifood or seafood.
  
- [Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture \(BMELV\)](#)
  - German government ministry responsible for food safety, animal health and health-related consumer protection.
  - Responsible for inspection of live animals and products of animal origin at designated Border Inspection Posts.
  
- [Central Customs Authority \(ZOLL\)](#)
  - Germany’s Central Customs Authority is responsible for determining eligibility of imported goods for clearance into Germany.

### 3.2 – REQUIREMENTS, STANDARDS & REGULATIONS

In general, certification requirements and other standards are developed at the EU level and enforced by Member State inspection services (e.g. German Customs). However, in addition to directives set by the European Union, Member States (e.g. Germany) may have their own additional requirements on imported food products.

The documentation required for exporting agrifood or seafood to the EU are extensive, so it is important to verify all requirements with your German customer(s) before any goods are shipped, as well as with the [Canadian Food Inspection Agency \(CFIA\)](#) and [Canada Border Services Agency \(CBSA\)](#). Another excellent resource is the [EU Trade Helpdesk](#) which allows users to select the country or origin and destination and access regulatory information specific to a product’s HS Code. At a minimum, the following requirements apply to imports to Germany:

➤ **Single Administrative Document (SAD)**

- All goods imported into the EU must be declared to the customs authorities of the appropriate country using the [Single Administrative Document](#) (SAD). The SAD is the common import declaration form for all EU countries and is usually completed by the importer or their agent.

➤ **Customs and logistics**

- The usual documentation procedure is for the in-market importer to collect the required paperwork and submit it to the relevant agencies. Depending on the product, documents required for customs clearance include: commercial invoice; customs value declaration; freight documents (e.g. bill of lading) freight insurance; packing list; customs import declaration.
- Any certifications required for establishing the safety of plant or animal products must also be verified prior to goods being released by Customs agents.
- The Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) is an international goods classification system to categorize imported and exported goods in international trade, determine appropriate duty fees, identify goods and for freight documentation, etc. HS compliance is the mandatory classification and declaration of goods when entering or exiting a country. If you are unaware of the correct HS code(s) for your product(s) they can be looked up using [Canada Post's online tool](#).

➤ **Food labelling**

- The contents of the label must be, at minimum, be listed in German.
- All foodstuffs marketed in Germany/EU must comply with general rules on food labelling (name of the product; list of ingredients; net quantity; minimum durability date; storage conditions or conditions for use; country of origin; nutritional content) as well as specific provisions for certain groups of products including animal and fishery products, genetically modified organisms (GMO), certain additives or flavourings, nutrition and health claims, and others. More information is available from [food labelling](#) web page of the European Commission's DG Health and Food Safety.
- To be marketed in the EU as "organic", a product must comply with food-import requirements and organic-product legislation. Labels must be clearly visible on product packaging and reference the certification control body. Canada and the EU recognize each other's rules and control systems for organic production. Organic products exported from Canada to the EU under the [Canada-EU Organic Equivalency Arrangement](#) can bear the EU organic production logo, although they must be accompanied by a certificate of inspection that is checked upon entry into the EU.

## SECTION 4: SELLING TO GERMANY

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### 4.1 – ROUTES TO MARKET

BC companies exporting products must make a choice: become an indirect export business and rely on brokers to ship, market and sell your goods; or manage the process directly and handle all the work and profits yourself. Most first-time exporters will enlist the services of a local intermediary, but direct export is possible in some circumstances. Considerations should be given to your business needs and available resources as well as the financial implications of each potential route to market before deciding on an approach.

Regardless of the approach it is important to undertake due diligence prior to establishing a contractual relationship with any company in Germany (see [Section 4.3: Due Diligence and Avoiding Scams](#)).

#### 4.1.1 Indirect Exporting

- **A third party agent or distributor is the most common route to German market.**
  - An agent sells a foreign supplier's goods in exchange for commission. The specific responsibilities of a German agent depend on your agreement but can include market intelligence, identification and pursuit of sales leads, sales promotions and after-sales services among other things.
  - In a distributorship arrangement, the distributor generally purchases goods from the foreign supplier for resale. In many cases, a distributor also acts as an agent for the same foreign firm.
  - Note that selling to a German agent usually involves selling a fairly large quantity of product at a lower rate than if you were selling directly to end customers.
  
- **Entering a market by working with an agent or distributor has several advantages.**
  - It reduces time and costs, and companies can benefit from the local knowledge and networks of the agent and access to qualified staff.
  - However, employing a third party will result in an additional cost to your products, and you may lose some control and visibility over sales and/or marketing. There are also intellectual property rights protection implications, increasing the risk of your product being copied or counterfeited.
  
- **Success for Canadian food exporters usually requires the services of a German importer.**
  - Few German retailers import products directly as they prefer to buy from central buyers/distributors specialized in the import of food & beverages.
  - Due to their wide range of distribution, central buyers are generally flooded with offers from competing suppliers. They will need a major incentive to take on a foreign product over that of an established product.
  - Note that the largest distributor isn't necessarily the most suitable for your product. In Germany, smaller niche players may be suitable.
  
- **Several resources provide access to potential importers, agents and distributors**
  - The English-language version of Germany's [National Association of German Commercial Agencies and Distribution](#) as well as the [German Wholesale and Foreign Trade Federation](#), can help you with contacting importers. Databases of importers by product class are available for purchase through companies such as [Best Food Importers](#).

- Before entering into any agreement, it is advisable to check the credentials of any agent and to familiarise yourself with the rights of agents as they are well protected under German law.

#### **4.1.2 Direct Exporting**

- **You can also sell your product directly although this approach is not common.**
  - With direct exports you handle all the logistics of marketing, selling, customs and labelling yourself but typically yield higher returns.
  - Direct sales to Germany's leading retailers are very difficult but possible through online sales.
  - Typically, retail buyers may only be interested in importing products directly if they are unique, possess some specific attribute, or offer significant advantages in terms of quality, price, or promotional support.
  - If you do sell directly note that large retailers' purchasing departments may be divided by retail format and, sometimes, by region of the country.
  - Listing fees, equivalent to several thousand dollars or more per product, are common and do not ensure shelf space if a profitable turnover is not quickly achieved.
- **Germany's retail landscape is concentrated but dynamic.**
  - The German grocery retail landscape is largely dominated by domestic players and is a typical oligopoly. The top 5 grocers amount to nearly 75% of the total market. The largest by market share are Edeka, Schwarz, Rewe, Aldi and Metro.
  - Most large retailers operate a variety of formats including hypermarkets, superstores, supermarkets, discount stores, cash and carries, and department stores.
  - Globally, Germany has the highest share of discounters in food retailing and while this channel remained the largest in 2016 there has been a trend in consumer preference toward smaller grocery formats, including convenience stores, small grocery retailers, and independents.
  - Supermarkets are, therefore, beginning to focus their attention on smaller stores in more proximate locations with more flexible store layouts.
  - Nonetheless, supermarkets and hypermarkets will remain popular as consumers are not always willing to pay the higher prices in convenient stores.

#### **4.1.3 E-commerce**

- **The online grocery retailing landscape in Germany is developing quickly.**
  - E-commerce has become an integral part of retailing although buying food online is still in its infancy.
  - Most online grocery sales are made from personal computers or laptops, because consumers are more likely to be thinking about groceries while at home and prefer using a bigger screen.
  - Consumers' growing interest in online shopping is due to increasing trust in methods of payment and a growing number of mobile shopping apps.
- **Amazon and eBay are the largest internet retailers that offer grocery products. Rewe and Edeka are also key online grocery players.**
  - However, some online retailers still do not offer fresh foods. Sales for online packaged food are popular as a result. Improvements in fresh food logistics are expected to increase online sales.
  - Amazon is expected to enter the online fresh food grocery category by 2021.
  - Consumers are also increasingly purchasing specialized food and drink online, which they are not able to buy in supermarkets or discounters.

- Urban areas have particularly embraced grocery e-retailing as customers are able to go to designated pickup locations to receive their goods.

## **4.2 – DEVELOPING IMPORTER AND CONSUMER DEMAND**

To help you sell into the German market, you will need to have some form of presence that enables you to attract buyers to your product or service offering. You can begin by participating in trade shows or you can establish your presence on the Internet using e-commerce as mentioned above and social media which is discussed below. Many exporters commonly start by employing both methods.

### **4.2.1 Food Exhibition Shows**

Germany is the world's number one venue for trade shows. Frequent attendance at the leading trade shows over a 12-18 month period is typical for new entrants as they are an excellent opportunity to build on desk research, present opportunities to assess customers and competition up close, and to validate early assumptions about the market. Trade shows, however, can be costly investments, so you want to make sure that your approach to food exhibitions is designed to give you best possible chance at turning interest developed at the show into actual business. Many businesses end up being disappointed that the large number of conversations and apparent interest at shows do not translate to real sales.

#### **➤ Preparing for the show.**

- The first step to trade show success is to find the most suitable exhibition in your target market. Understand your options, you may choose to simply attend to gather contacts and market intelligence if you have insufficient resources to host an exhibit.
- Acquire pre-show training. The effort and time dedicated to pre-show preparation may impact your success during and post-show. Pre-show training sessions are often offered on-site prior to the show and during the show.
- It is a good idea to book appointments with prospective buyers ahead of time and to inform current clients that you will be at the show.
- You will need to develop professional displays and promotional materials and should strongly consider bringing product samples to distribute. Begin trade show material development early. Incorporate potential delays and complications into your timeline.
- Determine customs and import regulations that pertain to your sample products.
- If the purpose of your trade show attendance is to begin selling be sure to have determined your price and sufficient stock to sell at the show and afterward.
- Usually, very highly placed business people attend trade shows in Germany. Take the direct approach and ask if your booth visitors make purchasing decisions. Do not rely on the job title to indicate responsibility levels.

#### **➤ Differentiate your products and brand from other exhibitors.**

- Where possible, consider a larger booth to create a bigger impact.
- Joining a delegation of Canadian firms to be part of a large presence will help your business to effectively trade on the Canadian brand. Joining an [AAFC Canadian Pavilion](#) is a great approach to attending trade shows, especially for new or smaller exporters.

#### **➤ Develop a strategy for converting inquiries into meetings and business after all trade shows are about generating qualified leads.**

- Participating in trade shows can be relatively costly, so it is important to understand the show and the audience you will be interacting with and to be sure that your approach is designed to give you best possible chance at turning interest developed at the show into actual business.
- Your exhibit should target specific prospects that are interested in the products you are selling.
- The longer perspective leads are left unattended, the less likely they are to evolve into business opportunities. Do not rush to be on the first plane out as the event ends. Being available for meetings with potential buyers the week after a show is a good strategy.

➤ **Germany hosts several major trade fairs which enjoy exceptional reputation within the global food industry. Some popular shows include:**

- [ANUGA](#) (the world's largest general food fair, held biannually in Cologne)
- [BioFach](#) (world trade fair for organics, held annually in Nuremberg)
- [ISM](#) (confectionery and snack food product fair held annually in Cologne)
- [Fruit Logistica](#) (fruit and vegetable marketing fair, held annually in Berlin)
- [ProWein](#) (the world's largest wine and spirits trade fair held annually in Cologne)

#### **4.2.2 Websites and social media**

Internet penetration in Germany is one of the highest in Europe with over 85% of people being connected to the internet. As a result, many small businesses use social networking sites to reach a large base of customers. You can use your website and social media to boost consumer demand by providing real-time client interaction and tailored content for your target audience.

➤ **The use of social media in German businesses is rising.**

- Nearly half of all businesses in Germany use some kind of social media as a means of marketing and communications.
- In Germany, Facebook, Xing, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs, LinkedIn and Google + are the social media tools most commonly used by businesses.

➤ **It seems obvious, but when you are entering a new market it is essential to update your website.**

- A good website will act as your corporate brochure and prospects will usually go straight to it.
- It's a good idea to have a German-language landing page and information customised for a German audience. You may also consider setting up a local .de domain.
- Keep in mind that it might not be sufficient just to translate your English-language site directly into German: it will need to be tailored for the local market. For example, the payment button must say 'buy' rather than 'proceed' or 'continue'.
- Use customer endorsements where possible and photographs to show your products in use.
- Ensure your site is equipped to accept different payment forms, bearing in mind that if consumers don't see the instrument they prefer to use, they may exit the sale.
- Maintaining an up-to-date website allows you to make contact with potential customers, reach German customers cost-effectively and introduce, promote and demonstrate new products.

#### **4.2.3 Utilizing in-market resources to find buyers**

- **Connect with industry associations and other professional bodies in Germany.**
- **Engage [B.C. Trade and Investment Representatives](#) and [Canadian Trade Commissioners](#) with connections and on-the-ground expertise.**

### 4.3 – DUE DILIGENCE

Corruption is rare in Germany as strict laws are rigorously enforced. However, conducting adequate due diligence on prospective partners is still advised. Doing so will help ensure that any potential partner has the specific permits, facilities, resources, capital, and other requirements necessary to meet their responsibilities.

- **Ask questions and avoid doing business with companies or agents that cannot provide you with necessary details.**
  - You might consider asking to see a notarized and translated copy of their business licence to determine information such as the establishment date, registered capital, name of legal representative, business scope, etc.
  - You could ask for a description of the scale of the company including audited or unaudited financial statements or records for the past few years.
  - You could ask for a list of their major customers including references.
  
- **Independently verify the information you have received.**
  - Use external data from government agencies, other authorized bodies and local experts to verify information provided by your potential partner.
  - Use the internet to conduct additional research. There may be comments, positive or negative, about the company or individual you are investigating online.
  - The [Trade Commissioner Service](#) can assist with some basic due diligence.
  
- **Your own preparedness is also integral to successful due diligence.**
  - Ensure you allow sufficient time to conduct verification and due diligence.
  - Ensure that you have conducted the necessary market research.
  - Remain especially vigilant immediately after trade shows and similar events where your company details and contact information may have been widely displayed and or distributed.
  - Be sure to examine and trace the email address of any email that appears suspect. Avoid clicking on any links within unsolicited email.
  - One proven method of testing legitimacy and protecting your company is to request payment up front. If your buyer is truly interested this request will not be problematic as it is standard in many industries. You could also require a letter of credit.
  - Remember, common sense is your best defense. If the order appears “too good to be true” it probably is.
  
- **Transparency is an on-going process.**
  - Rules and regulations, business environments and business partners are constantly changing. As such, due diligence is not a once off, standalone task. It is necessary throughout the exporting process but it particularly important in the initial and building relationship phase.

## SECTION 5: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS IN GERMANY

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### 5.1 – INITIATING RELATIONSHIPS

- **Having a local contact can be an advantage but is not a precondition to doing business in Germany.**
  - German business people do not need a personal relationship in order to work together.
  - As a result, cold-emailing is acceptable, however, it is not always easy to reach Germans via email so don't be surprised if you don't receive a response. It can be difficult to even get someone's email address in the first place.
  - If cold emailing proves unsuccessful the next best mechanisms for initiating contact include a strong and repeated presence at industry events, following up on leads after events, direct outreach, travel in Germany and securing a third party introduction.
- **Business relationships are formal and professional as the Germans maintain a strict separation between private and work life.**
  - It, therefore, can take time to forge personal relationships as they often play a secondary role in business dealings.
  - Your counterparts' expectation will be to get to know you better as you do business together.
  - Relationships are unlikely to be developed quickly or get in the way of initiating business but are ultimately very important.
  - Once they have made a commitment, they will try to develop a mutually beneficial, long-term relationship.

### 5.2 – LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

There are a number of verbal and non-verbal communication issues you should consider when doing business with a German. The following section outlines practical points that you should keep in mind.

- **German is the official language.**
  - German is also the predominant language in business spheres, but English is not uncommon.
  - You may be told that "everyone" in Germany can speak English, but this is incorrect.
  - Be sure to ask your partner which language they prefer to communicate in or if you will need a translator or interpreter. While they may be comfortable communicating in English often they prefer to discuss the technical details in their own language.
  - Note that using any German, even a basic expression of courtesy, will be appreciated.
- **If you do need an interpreter:**
  - Use them regularly and expect to make them part of the team. This means that they will be fully briefed before important meetings or negotiations and should be trained to a high level so that they know your business and product line and will know the right questions to ask.
  - After the meeting, debrief your interpreter on what he or she saw or understood during the meeting. An experienced professional can give you a cultural interpretation.
- **Be deliberate in your speech and body language when speaking through your interpreter.**
  - During a meeting, interpreters will normally sit behind you. It is important that you always look at the person you are addressing, not the interpreter, and remain patient.

- Speak relatively slowly, avoiding jargon and long difficult sentences. If necessary, write down things like large numbers to ensure certain understanding.
  - Do not stop in mid-sentence or interrupt the interpreter.
- **German communication is formal and direct.**
- In return, they do not easily recognise and respond to verbal subtleties such as indirect hints, messages 'between the lines' and many non-verbal signals.
  - Your German counterparts will appreciate if you communicate clearly and directly with them.
  - Such formality will dictate that emotions do not have a place in a conversation.
  - Germans do not find it hard to say "No" or "I can't", so you will get a straightforward answer.
  - Giving compliments is not part of German culture and can often cause embarrassment.
  - Don't mistake the German's listening habit of saying "Ja" to mean agreement. It means, "I'm listening".
- **Very little time is given over to small talk.**
- After introductions, Germans will generally prefer to get down to business almost immediately.
  - If you do, however, find yourself immersed in small talk appropriate topics include football (soccer), recent holidays, work and even beer.
  - You should avoid topics such as religion, political debates and their historical past - even if done in a joking manner.
  - When chatting, keep a physical distance from your partners - typically, a good arm's length.
  - Do not ask personal questions related to occupation, salary, age, family or children.
- **Germans use body language sparingly.**
- However, do be sure to maintain eye contact when addressing people, especially during initial introductions and presentations.
  - Never put your hands in your pockets while speaking.
  - Do not point your index finger to your own head - it is an insult.
  - Do not touch someone without permission.
  - The American "OK" sign is an unacceptable gesture .
  - Germans show their appreciation of a presentation at the end of a business meeting by rapping their knuckles on the table.
  - You should not shout or be too loud and don't put your feet on furniture or chew gum in public.
  - Do not be offended if someone corrects your behaviour. Policing each other is not unusual.
- **Expect a great deal of written communication.**
- You should use the correct title and form of address when writing to your German counterparts. The best forms of address are still, "Sehr geehrter Herr..." ("Dear Mr. ..."), "Sehr geehrte Frau" ("Dear Ms. ...") and "Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren" ("Dear Sir or Madam...").
  - Typing mistakes are frowned upon. Be sure to thoroughly read through e-mails before sending.
  - Make sure your subject line is easy to understand and to the point.
  - Include a signature with your job position, contact information, and e-mail.
  - Do not rely on Google Translate or similar services to translate your information for the German market.

### 5.3 – SOCIAL AND BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Business etiquette is of great importance to German business people. The best approach is to follow the lead of your hosts and watch how they handle social nuances. The following sections give an insight into the values, attitudes and culture of Germany.

- **Punctuality is highly important in Germany. Do not turn up late.**
  - Arrive about five to ten minutes early for any meetings or appointments. Showing up even five or ten minutes late is unacceptable.
  - If you expect to be delayed, telephone immediately and offer an explanation.
  - The emphasis on punctuality also extends to following up promptly on actions resulting from meetings, any commitments made, deliveries or payments.
  
- **Dress professionally, formally and conservatively when conducting business.**
  - Businessmen should wear dark coloured, conservative business suits, conservative ties, and white shirts with black or brown shoes.
  - Women also dress in dark suits with white blouses or conservative dresses. This form of dress is observed even in comparatively warm weather. Women wear closed pumps with lower heels in black, dark blue, brown, or beige.
  - Both men and women should refrain from removing a jacket or any article of clothing until your German counterpart does so while ostentatious jewellery and accessories, as well as visible tattoos or piercings (a pair of earrings for women excepted) are not recommended.
  
- **First names are usually reserved for family and close friends.**
  - Upon meeting someone for the first time it is best practice to use his or her title and surname, as in Herr (Mr.) or Frau (Mrs.).
  - If someone is a professor or doctor use Dr. or Professor instead. A person with academic credentials, good qualifications, and professional skills commands a lot of respect in Germany.
  
- **You will often be greeted with a handshake.**
  - The German handshake is firm and brief, conveying confidence and reliability.
  - You will have to shake hands with everyone in a room. Greet those who are hierarchically superior first. If you are uncertain of the hierarchical order those who enter the room first are usually the highest-ranking individuals.
  - As you shake hands maintain eye contact, give a brief nod and then depending on the time of day you can greet them with a friendly “Guten Morgen”, “Guten Tag” or “Guten Abend”.
  - If you have to leave early, shake everyone's hand again, starting with the most senior person.

### 5.4 – TYPICAL MEETING PROTOCOL

If you get a meeting with a German prospect, there is a good chance they are seriously interested. Germans tend to not like to waste time so are unlikely to meet you unnecessarily. In the event of meeting German counterparts following some of the guidelines below will help.

- **Prior to the meeting**
  - Meetings ought to be booked several weeks in advance.
  - If you are writing to schedule an appointment, the letter should be written in German.
  - Schedule meetings between 11-1 p.m. or 3-5 p.m. Avoid meetings in July, August or September.

- Changing the time and place of an appointment is not appreciated.
- Never set up a meeting for a lower ranked counterpart to meet with a higher ranked individual.
- Be sure to send documentation about your product, company and personal profiles in advance.
- It is also common practice to agree on a set agenda. As that agenda is strictly followed, it is advisable to put the most important subject first.

➤ **Most meetings are quite formal.**

- While the primary purpose of the first meeting is to become acquainted, the discussion will quickly focus on the business at hand.
- The agreed start and end time of meetings will be strictly followed.
- Do not sit until invited and told where to sit.
- Stand up when an older or higher ranked person enters the room to greet him/her.
- Logical, convincing discussions are preferred to "putting on a good show".
- German counterparts will be extremely well prepared. Be sure to match their preparation.
- Make sure your printed material is available in both English and German.
- Depending on the audience, it is often acceptable to present in English. Check beforehand.
- Written or spoken presentations should be specific, factual, technical and realistic.
- Germans abhor exaggeration. Be able to back up your claims with lots of data. Case studies and examples are highly regarded.
- It is generally considered very impolite to make or accept telephone calls during meetings.
- Avoid surprising German colleagues with unexpected information or a change in direction.
- Find out if your product or service needs to be customised for the German market
- If possible, bring product samples.
- They will expect questions from you – not only during the meeting, but in advance.
- Your product should be proven in other markets and with other customers. Germany is not traditionally an early adopter market.
- Don't expect to close a deal during the first visit. German companies like to analyse information before coming to a decision. Be patient, and do not try to rush people to make a decision.
- German companies expect prompt replies to business correspondence. They will produce massive written communications immediately after meetings to elaborate on and confirm discussions.
- Always prepare and distribute minutes, information etc. within 24 hours of the meeting.
- Generally, you can tell if a meeting went well if everyone is smiling and the German business partners suggest next steps at the end of the meeting.

➤ **Business cards are not given out as freely in Germany as in North America.**

- They should never be handed out in batches, and should instead be given in a more discreet, one-to-one arrangement, to reflect the exclusive value of an individual business relationship.
- It is also prudent to include a German translation on the flipside of the business card.
- Show advanced degrees on your card and make sure that it clearly states your professional title, especially if you have the seniority to make decisions.

## **5.5 – DECISION MAKING AND NEGOTIATIONS**

When entering into business negotiations with German business people, be aware of the following points to ensure a positive outcome from negotiations.

- **Decisions are often made by consensus by a group of senior managers after they receive consensual input from both employers and employees.**
  - The German emphasis on punctuality does not always extend to decision making. They would rather secure the right deal than rush an agreement through.
  - This can often result in a slow process. Furthermore, they will pore over every detail of your proposal in an attempt to reduce any risks.
  - Do not anticipate being able to speed up this process or for any significant conclusions to be reached immediately.
  - Do, however, try and create opportunities to directly influence the decision makers.
  - Note that when the Germans make decisions they usually do so by applying universal principles rather than considering the specific situation. They often dislike 'making exceptions.'
  - Personal feelings and experiences are considered irrelevant. Your time will be best spent focusing on empirical evidence, logical arguments, and objective facts.
  
- **Business negotiations are typically formal and professional but also approached in a consensual manner.**
  - The primary negotiation style is cooperative. Germans look for a win-win situation.
  - They tend to say exactly what they want and mean.
  - Never make a promise that you cannot keep.
  - Be ready to back up your business pitch with high quality data-driven information.
  - Watch your time. Avoid what they could see as over elaborating.
  - Ask questions that show you are listening attentively.
  - Price close to the amount you want to sell. Prices rarely move by more than 15 to 25 percent.
  - Focus on German market needs. Do not imply similarity between the two markets, such as, "Our products are very successful in Canada, so they will sell very well in Germany."
  - Avoid confrontational behaviour, hard sells or high-pressure tactics. It can be counterproductive.
  - Avoid contradictory statements, such as following a compliment with a complaint.
  - Remain patient, control your emotions, and accept the inevitable delays.
  - When negotiating, they often work their way down a list of objectives in sequential order and may be unwilling to revisit aspects that have already been agreed upon.
  - Jokes, anecdotes or spontaneous presentations are generally considered inappropriate.
  - At the end of negotiations, summarize what was discussed. Repeat all of the important points that were agreed upon.
  - Indicators of sincere interest include in-depth technical discussions and requests for further technical information.
  - Final decisions are translated into rigorous, comprehensive action steps that you can expect will be carried out to the letter.
  
- **Contracts are serious matters in Germany.**
  - Know that German law makes offers binding unless otherwise noted. It is best to mark your offers with 'good until ...' or to add a 'subject to change' clause.
  - Written contracts often spell out very detailed terms and conditions for the core agreements as well as for many eventualities.
  - It is recommended to consult a local legal expert before signing a contract. However, do not bring your attorney to the negotiation table as it may be viewed as a sign of mistrust.
  - Requests to change contract details after signature are rarely tolerated.

## 5.6 – SOCIAL ENGAGEMENTS

Don't expect to be taken out for many meals and evening programs. It is assumed you will want to have time to yourself after work. In the event you are invited out bare the following in mind.

- **The most common occasion is business lunch at a restaurant.**
  - A business lunch normally takes place between noon and 3 pm where the mood is more relaxed.
  - Some invitations may include the term "c.t.", which means "cum tempore", or "with time". This means you can arrive within around 15 minutes of the stated time without causing offence. If your invitation states s.t. meaning "sine tempore", or "without time" arrive at the stated time.
  - If you are attending a business meal, wait for the host to initiate most things - drinking wine, eating and even whether business ought to be discussed.
  
- **Germans take table etiquette and manners seriously.**
  - Remain standing until invited to sit down.
  - Wait for the host to place their napkin on their lap before doing so yourself.
  - You can start eating after your host has said a few words and once everyone has been served.
  - It is polite to wish everyone "Guten Appetit" before starting to eat.
  - Don't be afraid to try foods that are new to you. Refusing to even try is an insult to your hosts.
  - Germans do not generally serve other people. Plates of food are passed around the table and each person takes what and how much he wants.
  - Don't take more than you can eat. It's considered impolite to leave food on your plate.
  - All the food may not arrive at the same time. In this case, it is acceptable to ask politely if you can begin eating, so your meal won't get cold.
  - Germans keep their left hand on the table (but not elbows), partly because they also keep the fork in their left hand most of the time.
  - Germans don't normally drink tap water. If you prefer it, ask for "stilles Wasser" (still water).
  - Use a knife and fork to eat sandwiches, French fries, fruit, and most food.
  - It is customary to fold your napkin after eating and place it to the left side of your plate.
  - Germans don't tend to stay long after eating. The honoured guests are expected to make the first move to leave.
  - If you aren't sure what to do, watch what others are doing.
  - If you were explicitly invited, you do not need to pay. Refrain from dramatic and persistent efforts to obtain the bill, as this will not only create confusion and embarrassment.
  
- **You should not begin drinking before the host has made a toast.**
  - An honoured guest should return the toast later in the meal.
  - When clinking the glasses never cross anyone else's arm and carefully look into the eyes of the person you are clinking with, from the time the glass is raised, until it is placed back on the table.
  - The most common toast with wine is Zoom Wohl (To your health) while the most common with beer is Prost (May it be beneficial).
  - Schnapps is a popular drink at the end of meals. Not drinking is completely accepted.
  
- **It would be unusual for you to be invited to someone's home. If you are, the following points should help:**
  - It is appropriate to bring a gift of flowers, wine, chocolates, or a small gift that represents your home country or region.

- Flowers should be given in uneven numbers and unwrapped. Avoid presenting flowers in groups of 13. Don't give carnations, lilies or chrysanthemums. Yellow or tea roses are welcomed.
  - Gifts are usually opened when received.
  - Switch your mobile phone off or put it on silent.
  - Send a thank you note the following day to thank your host for her/his hospitality.
- **Gift giving among business associates is not typical.**
- However, if you go to a business social event, it's a little more commonplace. Stick with office items. Wine and liquor also work nicely but should be an upmarket label.
  - Employees in government institutions are strictly forbidden to accept anything.
  - A local food specialty of your home country is usually a good gift, provided it is not too exotic.
  - Avoid pointed objects like knives, scissors, umbrellas, personal items or extravagant gifts.

## 5.7 – MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

It is important to maintain the relationship as your counterpart will most definitely take a long-term view of business relationships. You should invest time and energy into nurturing the relationship by continuing to engage with your contacts. Avoid the temptation to focus on other activities and other deals once a contract is signed. You can demonstrate your long-term intent by some of the following examples:

- **Commit to regular contact.**
- An ongoing exchange of information helps each party understand the other, so they can build on their mutual interests. Often there is nothing, in particular, to discuss yet your partners will continue to communicate frequently. Relationships maintained in this way tend to have fewer problems and raise fewer complaints.
- **Continue to make visits to Germany**
- Visits to Germany should remain a regular feature of your export venture even after the relationship has been established. These trips help maintain your already established relationship. You should also try to bring the same team with you on each visit, so your buyers will be dealing with people they've already gotten to know.
- **Consider hosting your partners through reciprocal visits.**
- You may also like to consider reciprocal visits. Paying for your partners in Germany to visit your Canadian operations is a good way of keeping them informed and motivated. About half of the trip should be devoted to rest and relaxation, leaving time for building the relationship and an affinity for Canada and Canadian products. When hosting German guests, remember the effort they put into hosting and looking after you in Germany and reciprocate this.
- **Always keep your word.**
- You need to make sure that you always fulfill your promises. If you don't, your relationships will suffer as people lose trust in you. Honesty and transparency are much sought after when it comes to forming bonds with businesses, so you will become a much more attractive connection if you can nurture these traits through your existing relationships.

## SECTION 6: EXPORT SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

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### 6.1 – B.C. TRADE AND INVESTMENT REPRESENTATIVES AND CANADIAN TRADE COMMISSIONERS

Both the Canadian and British Columbian governments support export market development by locating staff in priority markets in order to provide current and on-the-ground advice and guidance to B.C. companies. Making use of these individuals is highly recommended, particularly if you have limited on-the-ground experience in the German market.

#### [B.C. Trade and Investment Representatives](#)

British Columbia's Europe trade and investment team is based in London.

- **B.C. Trade & Investment Representatives can assist current and potential B.C. exporters with a variety of services, including:**
  - Generating market intelligence and trade leads for specific B.C. products;
  - Advising on market entry and development strategies;
  - Providing contacts to an extensive network of international industry, government and community influencers and partners;
  - Supporting B.C. exporter participation in trade missions, tradeshow and related events; and,
  - Providing training to introduce B.C. exporters to world markets.

#### [Canadian Trade Commissioner Service](#)

The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service, with on-the-ground-intelligence and practical advice on foreign markets, helps Canadian companies make better, more timely and cost-effective decisions in order to achieve their goals abroad. As part of Canada's embassies and consulates, Trade Commissioners have privileged access to foreign governments, key business leaders and decision-makers. They have offices in Berlin, Munich and Düsseldorf.

- **Whether doing business abroad for the first time, or looking to expand into new markets, Trade Commissioners can work with you to:**
  - Determine if you are internationally competitive; decide on a target market; collect market and industry information and improve your international business strategy;
  - Determine the level of opportunity that exists in a particular market, advise on appropriate approaches to the market and gauge the amount of effort and resources required;
  - Connect with industry associations, potential buyers and partners, professionals in financial and legal institutions, agents and other business representatives to support the execution of your export strategy; and,
  - Assist with due diligence by conducting basic preliminary research on a local company from public sources, and the resolution of business problems and issues that you face in foreign markets.

Please note that conducting thorough background checks on local companies or providing translation or interpretation services is not part of the mandate of either the [B.C. Trade and Investment](#)

[Representatives](#) or the [Canadian Trade Commissioners](#). These services should be acquired directly by private sector service providers operating in foreign markets.

## **6.2 – LOAN AND COST SHARING PROGRAMS AND PROMOTIONAL SUPPORT**

Provincial and federal governments (and other agencies) offer several programs and engage in promotional activities aimed at supporting and developing exporters.

- [BC Ministry of Agriculture – Market Development](#)
  - The Ministry delivers a suite of market development programs and services aimed at further enabling B.C.'s agriculture, food and seafood sectors to increase export sales. This includes support for marketing skills training, market research and strategic planning, as well as participation in international market development activities.
  
- [Canada Pavilion Program](#)
  - The Canada Pavilion Program, a key component of Markets and Trade, is aimed at making trade show participation easier at the world's premier food and beverage events 'where the world shops'. Trade shows continue to be integral in taking advantage of opportunities arising from market access gains.
  
- [Canada Brand](#)
  - Agriculture and Agri-food Canada has developed a suite of free tools to help Canadian Agri-food and seafood companies gain a marketing advantage by linking Canada's positive image to their products. These include Canada Brand graphics and a photo library of high-quality images for use in marketing and promotional materials.
  
- [Export Guarantee Program](#)
  - Export Development Canada (EDC) will provide a risk-sharing guarantee on behalf of program participants to their financial institutions in order to provide firms with access to increased working capital and term financing.
  
- [Expansion Loan Program](#)
  - A loan program offered by the Business Development Bank of Canada aimed at companies wishing to expand their market, including export markets. Eligible activities include launching new marketing campaigns, developing new products, obtaining a certification, expanding foreign or domestic markets, and others.

## SECTION 7: APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 – KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

#### BC Trade and Investment Representatives

Website: <https://www.britishcolumbia.ca/global/trade-and-investment-representatives/europe-london/>

Email: [international@gov.bc.ca](mailto:international@gov.bc.ca)

##### *London Office*

79-91 Aldwych  
London, WC2B 4HN  
United Kingdom  
Tel: + 44 (0) 207 340 8583

#### Canadian Trade Commissioner Service

Website: [www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca/de](http://www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca/de)

Email: [deutschland.commerce@international.gc.ca](mailto:deutschland.commerce@international.gc.ca)

##### *Berlin Office*

Leipziger Platz 17  
Berlin, D-10117  
Germany  
Tel: +49 30 203120

##### *Munich Office*

Tal 29  
Munich, D-80331  
Germany  
Tel: +49 89 2199570

##### *Düsseldorf Office*

Benrather Str. 8  
Düsseldorf, 40213  
Germany  
Tel: +49 211 172170

#### Key German/European Union Agencies

##### *DG SANCO European Commission's DG Health and Food Safety*

Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety  
European Commission  
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel; Belgium

Tel: +32 2 299 11 11

Website: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/departments/health-and-food-safety\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/departments/health-and-food-safety_en)

##### *BLE- Bundesanstalt für Landwirtschaft und Ernährung*

Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (Germany)  
Deichmanns Aue 29  
DE-53179 Bonn

Tel: (+49) 228 99 6845-0

Website: <http://www.ble.de>

##### *BMELV - Bundesministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft*

Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture (Germany)  
P.O. Box 140270  
DE-53107 Bonn

Tel: (+49) 228 99 529 4641

Website: <http://www.bmel.de>

##### *ZOLL – Generalzolldirektion*

Central Customs Authority (Germany)  
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## **APPENDIX 2 – KEY PHRASES IN GERMAN**

<b>English</b>	<b>German</b>	<b>Pronunciation</b>
Hello	Hallo!	hâ-loh! (informal greeting)
Good Morning	Guten Morgen	gooh-ten mor-gun
Good Day	Guten Tag!	gooh-ten tahk!
Good Evening	Guten Abend!	gooh-ten ah-bent!
Good night (to sleep)	Gute Nacht	gooh-tuh nakht
Goodbye	Auf Wiedersehen!	ouf vee-der-zey-en!
Pleased to meet you	Freut mich.	froyt miH.
How are you?	Wie geht es Ihnen?	vee geyt ês een-en?
Fine, thank you	Gut, danke	Goot, dân-keh
I understand	Ich verstehe	ICK fer-SHTEH-uh
I don't know	Ich weiß nicht	ICK VYEss nickt
I don't understand	Ich verstehe das nicht	eesh fur-SHTAY-uh dahs nikht
Could you repeat that, please?	Können Sie das bitte wiederholen?	kern-en zee dâs bi-te vee-der-hoh-len?
Please speak more slowly	Können Sie bitte langsamer sprechen?	kern-en zee bi-te lâng-zâm-er shprêH-en?
Please write it down	Schreiben Sie das bitte für mich auf	Schrii-ben zee das bi-tuh fur mikh auv
Do you speak English?	Sprechen Sie Englisch?	shprêH-en zee êng-lish?
What does that mean?	Was bedeutet das	Vas be-doy-tet das?
I don't speak German	Ich spreche kein Deutsch	eesh spreH-khuh kine doitsh
English	Englisch	êng-lish
Excuse me	Entschuldigung	ênt-shool-dee-goong
How much does...cost?	Wie viel kostet . . . ?	vee feel kos-tet...?
Cheap	günstig	GUUN-stikh
Expensive	teuer	TOY-er
I'm sorry	Es tut mir leid	es toot meer lite
Please	Bitte.	bi-te.
Thank you	Danke.	dân-keh
You're welcome	Bitte.	bi-te.
What's your name?	Wie heißen Sie?	vee hays-en zee?
My name is....	Ich heiße....	iH hays-e....
Where are you from?	Woher kommen Sie	wo-her kom-men zee?
I'm Canadian	Ich bin Kanadierin	ikh bin Kan-Ah-dee-er-in
Yes	Ja	yah
No	Nein	Nine
Where are the bathrooms?	Wo sind die Toiletten?	voh zint dee toy-lêt-en?
I'm lost	<i>Ich habe mich verlaufen</i>	<i>ikh ha-buh mikh ver-lau-fen</i>
What time is it?	Wie viel Uhr ist es?	vee feel oohr ist ês?